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833 713 "sore" is still no better, and Kutkut comes a third time at the husband's request. The husband angrily asks Kutkut why he does not cure the woman of her "sore," and says he thinks Kutkut is lying. Kutkut, also angry, replies that the woman has no "sore," and asks the husband indignantly why he does not understand what to do with the woman. Then Kutkut places the husband in the exact position for copulation, but still nothing happens, and the husband does not know what it is all about. Kutkut then takes a hot taro from the fire and places it on the buttocks of the man. This makes him start, and involuntarily he acts. The man exclaims, "Ah, good, very good, wonderful, I like it very much." From this time on copulation has been known.

I was told at the end of the tale that if Kutkut had not shown the man there would be no children. When I asked the question as to how the husband and his wife and Kutkut came into existence there was no answer, and it was just regarded as the foolish question of an anthropologist.

BIRTH CONTROL AND ABORTION

842 847 These Lesu people are fully aware of the causal connection between intercourse and birth, although they do not know the exact physiological process by which the embryo is formed. However, they think they have a method of control over birth. There are certain leaves which are supposed to have the power of making a woman sterile, and others which are said to have an abortive value. To produce sterility or abortion several leaves are taken in succession. The leaves are chewed, the juice swallowed, and the pulp spit out.[1] Natives swear by the efficacy of these leaves. But

[1] See Medical Knowledge, pp. 293–297, for a detailed description of leaves and their use, and possible medical value.

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so also do they swear by the ability of the rain magician to make rain. The women are very sure of the power of the abortive leaves, and, as far as I know, no physical means of abortion is used. The knowledge of these sterility and abortive leaves is zealously guarded by those who know about them. They are usually men who have received the knowledge from their maternal uncle, or some other relative. This knowledge, like all medical and magical information, is a source of income, for when a man is requested to procure the leaves he is paid for his services.

It is of interest to learn why some women, even though they are in the minority, should want to be sterile or to have abortions. In discussing it the women are sometimes quite vague, merely saying that they or some other women do not want children because they do not want them, and, with a shrug of the shoulder, let it go at that. However, there are others who are more definite. Fear of pain at birth is one reason for not wanting a child, and one woman who had had one child told me that she then ate the sterility leaves because she did not want to go through the birth pains again. Several other women told me they did not want children because it interfered with their dancing, which forms so large a part of ritual life, and which they so thoroughly enjoy. Still another reason advanced was that it interfered with their having sexual relations.[1] No woman would ever admit this as her own reason, but some of them gave it to me as the motive for other women not wishing children. These were the only three reasons for not desiring children that I was able to secure, and it must be remembered that these women were in the minority. The larger number of women said that they had never eaten sterility or abortive leaves, and had no desire to. As has already

[1] This refers to the taboo on intercourse during pregnancy and the nursing period. One man said he did not want his wife to have children because of the restraint it put on *his* sexual life.

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842 been seen, when a child is born nothing could exceed the affectionate care bestowed on an infant by his mother and the whole family. There are thus the two contradictory sentiments, desire for and rejection of motherhood existing side by side in the same society.

EXTRA-MARITAL RELATIONS

837 Sexual life is not confined to marriage, and supplementary to it is the extra-marital intercourse. It is the socially accepted custom for a wife and a husband to have intercourse with a number of additional people, and either one, if young, would be considered abnormal if he or she did not have it. A young married woman without lovers would be in the same social position as a young girl in our society who never has any beaux or is never invited to parties.

Middle-aged women discussed their past affairs with me quite freely, and most of them had had so many lovers that they could not remember the exact number. One old woman, now a frightful-looking hag with a cataract over one eye, asked me rather indignantly if I expected her to remember every man with whom she had ever slept. Permanent intrigues with one man do not seem to be common, for, if such were the case, the woman would divorce her husband and marry her lover.

The woman and her lover usually have their intercourse in the bush, and the name for the lover is *malis lotin*, literally, husband bush. Sometimes if the husband is away, or sleeping in the men's house, they may have it in the woman's house.

837 431 Each time a man copulates with a woman other than his wife he gives her one string of *tsera*, which she in turn gives to her husband later. This *tsera* is not a payment any more than the marriage price is a payment for the bride. It is simply part of the traditional code of reciprocity whereby nothing is ever given for nothing. To-day, at the northern

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end of the island, near the white man's capital, where the natives have become more sophisticated, some girls go bush with their lovers and receive only a stick of tobacco in return. News of this has trickled down to Lesu, and the old women there speak scornfully of this new custom and of the cheapening of the girls thereby.[1] Yet husbands are not completely oblivious of the economic significance of their wives' *affaires de cœur*. On one occasion, in the not very distant past, many of the Lesu men went to Tabar, and during their absence the wives had intercourse freely with other men. The women thus collected much *tsera* and gave it to the men when they returned home. The husbands, I am told, were much pleased. One woman told me that her husband himself brought the first lover to her because he wanted the *tsera*, and she did not object. This is the exception, however, rather than the rule. Moreover, the husband in this case, now an old man, is by no means an avaricious or greedy man. Several times he brought me bananas and pawpaws, and refused payment for them, saying they were a gift in return for some tobacco I had previously given him.

No woman is ever taken against her will, and rape by a native is unknown. If a woman does not want to go with a man she merely says "no," giving an excuse or not, as she pleases. Usually she will merely say that she does not feel like it, and that ends the matter.

Although these women are aware of the causal connection between intercourse and birth, they all told me very emphatically that all their children are their husbands'; for, continue the women, after they have had intercourse with their lover they have it the next day with their husband, and this makes all of the children his. Each woman earnestly

[1] In no way can the extra-marital intercourse for payment be considered similar to the prostitution of our civilization. In New Ireland a woman who did not receive the *tsera* from her lover would have lowered herself and be completely without prestige or position in the community.

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842 affirms that copulating with her husband afterwards makes the children his. One woman, Numda, was an exception, and frankly told me that two different lovers were the fathers of two of her children. She said she knew this was so because of the resemblance of the children to their respective fathers. Her husband knows it too, as did also the two fathers, one of whom gave *tsera* to his child. Both the lovers died when the children were quite young.

848 851 In this society, where every woman has a husband who accepts all of her children regardless of their actual father, there are no illegitimate children. But, as always, the usual exceptions occur, and there are a few unmarried women—a widow who has not yet remarried, or some young girl who has not married for some reason or other as soon as she has come of age.[1] Now if such an unmarried woman becomes pregnant her lover is under no obligation to marry her, and takes no responsibility for any issue. First, he does not know if the child is really his, as the woman has probably had several lovers. Secondly, all he wanted was intercourse, not marriage, and the Melanesian distinguishes very clearly between the two. His attitude is in striking contrast to that of the husband, who accepts all of his wife's children as his own, regardless of whether they actually are or not. Should an unmarried woman have children, there is no social ostracism of her or the children. Landa, the widow with ringworm disease, has already been mentioned. Her children have no father, but both they and the mother have a social position in the community equal to anyone, and are not affected by the lack of a father and husband. While no disgrace is attached to a fatherless child, still it is considered unfortunate not to have a father, one of the

848 773

[1] To-day the reason may be that her betrothed is away working on a plantation, and she is waiting for him to return. But even in the past there were occasionally women who were not married as soon as they came of age. See the individual life histories.

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When Nunda was ill (during my visit) her husband was a model of affectionate concern, and Kokala, Pulong, and all the other women of her clan looked after her. She recovered. 159

Tsangamor was born in the hamlet of Onel. Before her first menses she chewed the sterility leaves which an older woman gave her. She said that after chewing the leaves her stomach "dried up," and that she therefore could not have children. 159 842

She had no sexual relations before her first menses, and when they occurred there was the usual feast. But she did not marry at this time. Instead she had many lovers in the bush. She lived with one man from Tabar for some time, and he gave her four *tsera*. Finally he went back to Tabar. Her other lovers gave her one *tsera* each time she went to the bush with them. As she had no husband, she kept all the *tsera* for herself, and acquired a basket full of currency. As far as I can make out, her lack of a husband was due to her not wishing one. 159 836

Then later she deemed it wise to have a husband. Her value as a potential wife had in no way diminished because of her previous lovers. She now married Landow, with whom she had no sexual intercourse before the marriage rites. He made the usual payment of five *tsera*, pigs, and gifts of fish and bananas to her mother and two sisters, and also as was customary worked in her mother's garden. This marriage took place about a year or two after her menses. Landow came from the hamlet of Panat, and after his marriage lived in his wife's hamlet, Onel. 159 [583]

This marriage lasted for about three years, when Murrow from the village of Langania came along and took her away from Landow. Tsangamor told her husband that she did not like him any more, and that she did like Murrow. Landow was not cross, and said, "All right, you go." Murrow now 159 581

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rain) and no theoretical interest in them, as far as I could ascertain. A few people are afraid of thunder, because they think the cloud may fall down on them, but many others are unafraid. The rainbow is noted, but there is no explanation for it.

The theory of birth has been given in another context, and it is only necessary to briefly recapitulate here. It is known that pregnancy follows intercourse, and it is thought that the embryo is formed from the blood, and the cessation of the menses is recognized as the beginning of pregnancy. Death, unless it has some obvious cause, such as falling from a tree or drowning, or unless it happens in old age, is thought to be due to black magic, or more literally "poisonous" magic.

For digestion there is a native word, *jäsikoramin*, which might be literally translated "food finishes going down." It is thought that the food remains in the stomach for a day and then comes out as faeces. Although it is known that food is necessary for strength, there is no notion of the interaction of food and blood. Terms "hot" and "cold" are used to describe the conditions of the stomach, and bananas and pawpaws are thought to make the stomach cold, while taro makes it hot.

MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE

Illness may be due to magic or more natural causes, and medical practice consists mostly of the use of certain leaves and roots and magic. Magical medical practice is considered under the heading of Magic. Here only the medical art which has no magic is described. The knowledge of medical practice is fairly widespread. Many people know remedies for one or two ills, but there are a few men and women who are specially skilled in native medicine and know more than the others. A native "doctor" is paid for his services, provided his patient gets better.

3:Chinnery G, E-5 (1929)1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10

adequately with the problems arising from these conditions. The high infant mortality rate in places as favorably situated as Munuwai, Losuk, Nono, Laraibina, Lugagun, &c., however, is difficult to explain. Between Munuwai and Kavieng, the conditions of life for child-bearing women and for infants are not so difficult as those in villages lower down the road. In all the villages above-named, infants are commonly fed on taro and other solid foods. Mission influence however is very strongly established in this part of the district, and, as the villages are within reach of the medical authorities at Kavieng, conditions should improve as time goes on.

OLD PEOPLE.

It is amazing to find on this road such a large number of extremely old people. Nowhere else in the Territory have I noticed so many. The males numbered 604 and the females 815. Practically all of them were grey-haired or bald, and in the lower end of the road many of the bald men wore neat wigs of human hair. Some of them are survivors of the old black-birding days, having worked on the cane-fields in Queensland. It is doubtful if many of these old people will survive another two years, a possibility that might be remembered when the death rates for the next few years are being tabulated.

WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE.

Out of the women enumerated, I counted 1,779 who were definitely said by the elders to be the fertile women on whom the future population depended, until females at present under age of puberty could become married. The number of reproductive women is probably larger, but I could only estimate this figure, and in this was assisted by the old men.

ABORTION.

The tables disclose a large number of fruitless unions, 34 per cent. of which are due apparently to sterility. Some of my informants told me that the women chew the leaves of plants and drink infusions from leaves, roots, &c., both to prevent conception and to procure abortion. It is not easy for a male observer to disentangle the mass of information offered on this subject, but, as Dr. (Miss) Powdermaker is now making an intensive study in the area with especial reference to women, valuable data may shortly be forthcoming. It is said there are also mechanical methods of procuring abortion. A peculiar aspect of the information regarding sterility is that women chew certain leaves when newly married, and become sterile, but, when later on they desire to have children, another species of plant is eaten to restore fertility. This could not be closely investigated, but my information has been passed on to Dr. Powdermaker, who may be successful in securing reliable information on the point.

3: Chinnery G, E-5 (1929) 1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10

A large number of the apparently sterile women are very old. The usual reply to a question concerning the lack of children is that the bearing of children is a burden which interferes with the efficiency of women in garden and road work, or the oft repeated, "laze along push push", one suggesting deliberate abortion, and the other lack of desire.

APATHY.

We are dealing with a people who have been profoundly upset by the coming of European settlement, which during the first few years rudely interrupted local conditions of life, and practically withdrew the majority of able-bodied males and many females of reproductive age from the villages, and continued to drain the population of its best blood year after year. The old German methods of uniting the stocks meant, in effect, that bush people and coastal people were deprived of their racial and social individuality, and compelled to live more or less on one another's ground, thus perforce losing the very characteristics that make for group stability. By the land alienation that took place during these years, natives found themselves being gradually pushed into corners here and there by the ever-expanding European settlement. The road work and other uses to which the relatively few remaining able-bodied men were put left small time for gardening and other native occupations. On top of these disturbing influences came the Mission with its new cultures. Pressure was brought to bear on all practices having the slightest resemblance to European standards of immorality. The natives who led an active sexual life with more or less promiscuity, in which they were constantly stimulated by various dances that gave incentive to and opportunity for sexual expression, now heard that their most natural and spontaneous activities were things of which to be ashamed, unless regulated in accordance with the standards taught by the Mission. As a prominent headman said to me, "the romance, excitement, and adventure of sex have gone. Always the native teachers speak of it in church and school as a thing of shame. Before, men and women gratified their desires when and where they found them. Now, to go into the bush with your lover is to be publicly shamed. The Missions say to the people who are married, 'You must have more children', but how can there be children without sex life, and how can there be sex life without sex play. Our night dances are practically forbidden, romance and adventure now appear to be sins, and the boys and girls are ashamed, and have no desire ('laze along, push push')."

There is no doubt that in olden days the native ceremonial and social life stimulated considerable sexual freedom. In many places women were permitted to have lovers who were to a certain extent recognized socially, and who contributed payments to the husband.

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surreptitously. Divorce is moderately common and individuals may have a succession of mates.

During the period of pregnancy a women may have no sexual intercourse with her husband or anyone else. The man may, however, have sexual intercourse with a woman other than his wife. After the birth of the infant neither the mother nor her husband may have intercourse with each other, or with anyone else, during the period of lactation. For the women there is thus an abstention from sexual intercourse for a minimum of three years and for perhaps as much as four. This taboo, if kept, would cause a long interval of time between births. It is difficult to find out exactly how strictly it is kept. Like all taboos in primitive societies it is sometimes broken. But one cannot collect statistics on the subject because one only hears of the cases when the culprits are found out. After living in the society for almost a year, the writer is of the opinion that it is kept moderately strictly. There is a grave social stigma for those who break it and are found out, and their infant is supposed to become ill. One such case happened during the author's visit and was the cause of much gossip. It was known that the parents of a certain sickly infant had broken the taboo and the natives all pointed to their unhealthy infant as the result. It is more difficult to break this taboo and not be found out than it is for a member of our society to transgress our custom of monogamy and not be caught. In the primitive society under discussion there are several conditions which make secrecy difficult. First, the village is small, numbering only a couple of hundred, and everyone knows everyone else well. Secondly, practically all of the social life is carried on outdoors, and extra-marital intercourse generally takes place in the bush, which limits somewhat the privacy. Thirdly, these people, like all others, love to gossip and indulge in it to a great extent. It is therefore not easy to conceal a violation of this taboo. The social disgrace of being detected, and the belief that it will harm the child, are strong deterrents in a society motivated largely by social prestige.

There is no infanticide and, as far as I know, no physical means of abortion. There is, however, a leaf, or rather several leaves, chewed by the women and believed to cause sterility. There is another leaf which if chewed within two months after conception will make the embryo disappear, according to native belief. Specimens of both kinds

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842 of leaves were obtained, but the writer has not yet had the opportunity of having them identified. Sterile women seriously attribute their sterility to the use of these leaves, and natives swear by their efficacy. But so do they also swear by their ability to make it rain by magic.[8]

844 Women usually work in their gardens right up to the time of giving birth to the child. Occasionally they may slacken their labor a bit a month or so before the time of birth, but this is not the rule. They resume their work usually about two weeks after birth. The long 853 period of lactation has already been mentioned. In addition to the mother's milk, the infant is fed on baked taro within a day or two after birth. The mother chews it first and then gives it to the infant. There are other practices and customs which indirectly have a bearing on the vital statistics, but in this paper only the obvious ones can be indicated.

Household Census

592 Before presenting the statistics, a household census for one village (Lesu) is given. The household corresponds roughly to the individual family and its usual occupants are husband and wife, female unmarried children and young male children. Should a man have two wives, each one will usually have her own home, but sometimes they share the same house, particularly if there is much discrepancy in their ages. Should a woman have two husbands, one of them will usually count the [882] men's house as his home. The unmarried men and boys of from approximately ten years sleep in the men's house. But this does not prevent the young boys from eating with their family and being a part of the household as far as sharing its duties and pleasures. Married men, for various reasons, occasionally sleep in the men's house. The girls sleep at home until they are married, and there is no women's house corresponding to the men's house. An older relative (widow or widower), too feeble to live alone, may also be an occupant of the household.

162 The village of Lesu contained 66 households. There were 62 adult males and 63 adult females (all married), and 65 male children and 42 female children. Nine of the adult males and two of the females were

[8] Dr. Hrdlička investigated certain objects which Indians believed would cause artificial sterility. He found them ineffectual. Hrdlička, A., Physiological and Medical Observations among the Indians of Southwestern United States and Northern Mexico. Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 34, p. 165.